

***City/Parish Recreation Advisory Commission
February 10, 2020 Meeting Minutes***

Attendance:

Commission

Leroy Barrington	Brach Myers	Johnnie Stinson, Jr.	Judy Placer
Joseph Tidwell	William LaBar	Matt Hulin	Jennifer Jackson
Douglas Cochrane			

Staff:

<i>Ans</i> Gerald Boudreaux	Frank Wittenberg	Royal Hill	Wayne Wills
Todd Robertson	David Gary	Nourine Lanerie	

Guests: Merlin Leger, Walter Guillory

Meeting called to order at 5:31 p.m. by Chairperson Judy Placer. Opened with a Prayer and Pledge of Allegiance.

Recognition of Guests/Staff Members:

Chairperson Judy Placer welcomes Merlin Leger and Walter Guillory.

Correspondence/Announcements:

None

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes/Monthly Reports (Action Required):

Monthly reports for October 2019, November 2019, December 2019, January 2020, and the previous meeting minutes had been mailed. No questions or comments noted. Leroy Barrington motions to accept the meeting minutes as written; seconded by Joseph Tidwell; no opposition, motion passed unanimously.

Director's Report – Gerald Boudreaux

Gerald asks if there are any questions on the financial report. No questions noted.

Commission Meeting Dates/Committee Meeting Format

Gerald reviews the 2020 commission meeting dates (handout included in packet); the only unconfirmed date as of now is the August meeting date. Our departmental council budget hearing will serve as our meeting for that month, and we will notify you of the exact date and time once we receive it. Gerald advises that the only other date not listed will be the facility tour in the summer months. We will schedule it around the summer enrichment program dates and other departmental events. In the event of a committee meeting, all of the commission members will be invited to attend. We usually hold committee meetings during the lunch hour, so that no one has to miss too much work.

New City and Parish Councils

Gerald advises that we now have two separate councils, one city council and one parish council. Their contact information is included in the packet tonight for your review and information.

Future Commission Changes/Structure

Gerald advises that we will communicate with the new councils regarding the direction of this commission. This commission was comprised of nine appointments from the previous City-Parish Council and two appointments from the Mayor-President. Now that we have a total of 10 council members, a decision will have to be made moving forward. Gerald advises that his recommendation will be to transfer one of the Mayor-President's appointments to the council, and to work through the existing terms of the current commission members. As of now, we have not been informed of any changes regarding this commission.

Departmental Budget Document – 2019-2020

Gerald advises that the 2019-2020 fiscal year began on November 1, 2019, so we are now in the third month. A copy of our departmental budget is included in the packet tonight for your review. Gerald adds that if there are any questions, feel free to call his office or any of the managers, and we will get you the information. This is our guide to get through the fiscal year and we will continue to do as much as we can without growing the budget. Leroy asks if the city and recreation programs have separated. Gerald advises that they have not; our programs will not separate, but the funding will remain separate.

Parish Parks Funding – Capital Projects

The capital projects in the parish have been stymied due to lack of funding, so we have not been able to have any major improvements at those parish facilities. Judy asks if we have received the \$2 million from the rededication of the library millage last year. Gerald advises that we have not received it yet, but we are finalizing our needs assessment list. This will be a one-time infusion into our parish parks that have not seen any funding like this in over 10 years. Gerald adds that a budget revision is in the works to put the money into a public works fund earmarked for parish parks. These funds will allow us to assist the youth neighborhood associations who have been bearing the costs for years in an effort to provide quality youth programs. We will have the opportunity to improve quality of life projects such as walking paths and playground equipment; repair fences and build new pavilions. Matt asks if the commission will have a list of projects to review before the next meeting. Gerald advises that we will provide that information prior to the next meeting. Joseph asks if there has been any further discussion with Youngsville and Broussard about absorbing those parks. Gerald advises that those parks are paid for and we still use them for our programs. Some of our teams are currently using them for practice sites. Our soccer program is using Foster Park for our residents who participate in soccer and live on the south side. Our soccer program is handling the maintenance and some of the utility costs. In our operating budget, we have some things in place to offset some of the maintenance costs at Foster Park. Gerald advises that we are looking into joint facility agreements in some of the communities to see if we could make that work without relinquishing those parcels. We are doing assessments with the small towns to see what their needs and wants are. Joseph suggests that we might be able to enter into some kind of agreement with Broussard to use Arceneaux Park. Gerald advises that he met with Mayor Bourque and they do not want the park; however, they would like to host special events there. William asks if the needs analysis performed on the

parish parks is a public document. Gerald advises that it was done by the CREATE team and presented at our budget hearing last year so it is a public document that we can provide for the commissioners. The CREATE team partnered together with some UL students and put the assessment together.

Beaullieu Dog Park

Gerald provides an update on the issues at Beaullieu Dog Park. We have stayed in a negative light, especially on social media, mainly due to the drainage issues. We have worked together with the Public Works Department and are now in the last phase of the drainage project. Hopefully, this will help generate some positive feedback as this is a great park for those who have dogs. Gerald asks Frank to provide further details on the drainage project.

Frank advises that he spoke with Public Works last summer regarding the issues with water retention and we were able to do some of the work in-house with our department and Public Works. A design was prepared for subsurface drainage and we will have to shut down the park for a period of time to perform the work. William asks where the water will go once the project is complete. Frank advises that it will go into the coulee located between Beaullieu Park and Comeaux Center. Joseph asks if the complaints have all been strictly about drainage. Frank advises that about 90 percent of the complaints have been about drainage. Judy asks if the park is utilized regularly and if the patrons are responsible for their dog's waste. Frank advises that it is heavily used and signage has been placed in the park regarding the responsibility of dog owners to clean up after their dog. Frank adds that there are dog bag stations installed in the park. These stations were donated and are a great benefit to us. Gerald advises that a lot of the larger cities have dog parks and they are a great community service, as well as inexpensive. Due to the drainage issues, we have spent around \$50,000 to date.

Ethics Board Request

Gerald advises that we wanted to get ahead of any requests from the Louisiana Board of Ethics, as our chairlady has received a few in the past. As per the findings of the board, the members of this commission are not obligated by law to disclose any personal financial information because they do not allocate or approve any expenditures. Gerald adds that if anyone receives a letter from the Louisiana Board of Ethics requesting any financial information, send it to his office and we will handle it.

Athletic Programs – Frank Wittenberg

Frank advises that we had an increase of 22 youth basketball teams this year, which has been our biggest increase in five years. The participation numbers in tennis and aquatics continue to be good, and all of the divisional information and participation numbers are included in his monthly report. Judy advises that she is amazed with the soccer participation numbers, 2300 kids is fantastic. Judy adds that there are over 800 ladies that play in the Lafayette Tennis League and the mildew on our hard tennis courts is an issue. Frank advises that our purchase requisition was recently approved so we will be moving forward with that project to repair that issue. Judy compliments Frank on the yearly youth program calendar included in his report. Frank advises that we have been preparing this for years, but added a few new things this year.

Jennifer asks about the cross country meets being held at Acadiana Park, specifically why the tennis courts cannot be used during that time due to no parking, and if reserving parking spots for tennis players is an option. She adds that the tennis players are told to go to Beaver Park, where they have to pay to play. Frank advises that Acadiana Park is the only location where the schools can run cross country, but he will look into a possible solution. Frank adds that we do have tennis courts at Brown Park and other locations where there is no charge to play, but Beaver and Thomas are our only locations where there is a charge.

Brach asks if the handicap access at OJ Mouton pool has been added. Frank advises that we are in the process of getting quotes, and should have something in place before that programs starts in May 2020.

Centers and Programs – Royal Hill

Royal advises that the monthly calendars were included in his monthly report and they include a listing of activities and programs being held at the centers. The process has begun for the hiring of the summer enrichment program workers. The roof projects at the Comeaux and Martin Luther King Centers have been completed. Joseph asks if the summer workers are paid or do we use volunteers. Royal advises that they are hired at the rate of \$10 per hour. They must be 18 as of March 2020 and the program runs from June 8, 2020 – July 26, 2020, from 7:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Joseph advises that he will pass this information on to his son's high school soccer team to see if any are interested. Judy asks if we have advertised at the university. Royal advises that we have. Judy asks about the low monthly participant numbers at Girard and Domingue. Royal advises that Girard numbers were low due to the renovations and Domingue is a work in progress with instructor led activities. Matt asks if the pickle ball court lights have been installed yet. Frank advises that the bid opening is scheduled for next week and the work should begin in April. Jennifer asks for a refresher on what exactly pickle ball is. Frank advises that it is similar to badminton; only with whiffle balls and big paddles. Judy adds that it is the fastest growing sport for older people. Discussion follows.

Hebert Golf Course – Wayne Wills

Wayne advises that January was a mixed bag when it came to weather, and golf continues to be at the mercy of the weather conditions. The concrete work around the clubhouse was completed and the inside of the golf course art renovations were completed as well. The foundation work under the bridges is finished, and we are now waiting on the weather to tie the concrete work into the bridges. The high school teams have started practicing at the course, so there has been quite a bit of activity on the course. Wayne adds that most of the new equipment has been ordered and received and we are now in a holding pattern waiting on the weather to improve.

Les Vieux Chenes – Todd Robertson

Todd advises that January weather has been pretty rough on the golf course. The maintenance crew has been busy cutting down trees and trimming up low hanging branches around the golf course. Todd adds that the normal maintenance of edging cart paths and trimming back headings is ongoing during this slow time. Hopefully the weather will improve soon.

The Wetlands Golf Course - David Gary

David advises that January was a down month as the course received around eight inches of water. The golf tournaments helped on the revenue side. On the maintenance side, the crew has been busy pruning trees, working on bunkers, and other routine maintenance. Judy asks if the special is still going on and what time do the high schools practice at the courses. David advises that it is; however, it is not as effective during the winter months. The high schools usually practice around 2:30 p.m., so everything usually works out. Matt asks if the special is available at all three golf courses and if the annual passes are valid from the date of purchase. Todd advises that the special is available at all three golf courses on Wednesdays and Thursdays and the annual pass is valid for one year from the date of purchase. Doug advises that this time of the year is the hardest for golf courses. He has been to all three golf courses and the complaints have been addressed.

Committee Reports:

None

Old Business:

None

New Business:

Gerald welcomes Barbara Gauthier from Scott Area Team Sports.

Next meeting – April 13, 2020, at 5:30 p.m.

William LaBar motions to adjourn, seconded by Johnnie Stinson; no opposition, motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 6:24 p.m.